

SEWER COMMISSION MINUTES

May 11 2011

7:03 PM

Mr. Connolly - The regular meeting of the Town of North Smithfield Sewer Commission was called to order on Thursday, April 28, 2011 at 7:40 P.M. at Kendall Dean School.

Roll Call - Mrs. Paul - In attendance was: Mr. Nordstrom, Mr. Connolly, and Mr. McGee. Mr. Carpenter, Superintendent and Mr. Wilcox were both present. Mr. DeCelles and Mrs. Sheridan were not present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on a 3-0 aye vote to table to the next meeting.

REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT- Mr. Carpenter

Mr. Nordstrom asked if they paid anything to the town as of yet regarding Dowling Village?

Mr. Carpenter stated the only thing that has been paid is for permits.

Mr. Connolly asked if he spoke to Mr. Geremia about the line cleaning?

Mr. Carpenter did call him last week and that he apologized and that they were extremely busy and would call him this week but have not heard back from him as of yet. He spoke with the finance department and they can pull that line item out and hold it out for next year.

REPORT FROM SEWER/WATER COORDINATOR - Mr. Wilcox

Mr. Wilcox informed the commission that for 167 Mendon Road, a call was placed to E-1 by Mrs. Hamilton that F.R. Mahoney will replace the entire control/alarm panel itself. The problem with that is that we have to get an electrician to do that because F.R. Mahoney feels that they shouldn't be mounting or wiring that panel.

Mr. Carpenter emailed Dawn at F.R Mahoney yesterday and asked her who was going to install the panel and if he gets the electrician who is going to cover the costs? And she said that they were not planning on installing it. He stated it is under warranty. If E-1 is going to send the box, someone would have to install it. What he'll do is get the electrician to install it and then pay him from the town and then bill E-1 not F.R. Mahoney but the factory to reimburse the town.

Mr. Wilcox indicated that F.R. Mahoney has not even started the tooling for the equalizer diaphragm replacement that they promised to fix approximately one year ago. They have not even started it and are months away from doing any of that. There are people calling F.R. Mahoney directly asking them when that will be scheduled. F.R.

Mahoney is telling the residents to call the town so the town can tell them it is months away from tooling.

Mr. Nordstrom asked Mr. Wilcox if those residents that are calling are they having problems with the diaphragm?

Mr. Wilcox's response was no. He indicated that they are not replacing the diaphragms that it is going to be a clear cover.

Mr. Nordstrom asked how many bad diaphragms are there that have been complained about.

Mr. Wilcox indicated that there are six.

Mr. Carpenter indicated that since they have been doing the installations, he opens the covers and if the diaphragms are crushed he will fix them and list those that were crushed. Since then they have been doing that last year, they have not had any that collapsed.

Mr. Wilcox indicated that they are still looking for more information on both of the extensions of the warranty from F.R. Mahoney.

Mr. Nordstrom asked what is the difference between the warranty they have now and the extended warranty?

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Mr. Wilcox indicated it is the cost between each household for that type of pump. If it is a duplex, what is that warranty going to cost, and the same for a simplex pump, what is that warranty going to cost so it can be budgeted. The town has an actual warranty description from E-1 from F.R. Mahoney which includes two years on parts and labor as it describes it. He stated that they would like to have an amount at the end per resident or type of pump. There are three different outdoor models.

Mr. Carpenter will try and call Mr. Ed Quann to see what he is looking for.

Mr. Connolly stated it appears like a service contract instead of a warranty.

Mr. Wilcox indicated that he was very specific in the wording and there was no change in the extension of the two year warranty based on the outdoor pumps. They only need a price on that.

Mr. Nordstrom asked if he be contacted either by e-mail or a call on the outcome.

**REVIEW OF F/Y 2011-2012 PROPOSED WATER/SEWER BUDGET –
Mr. Carpenter**

Mr. Brian Silvia the finance director brought a revised copy of the proposed sewer budget. He indicated that on page 2 under debt service what was not included was the 1.7m general obligation bond which was from two years ago for the ball field and the grinder pumps. It was sitting on the general fund and the sewer portion was not accounted for and that is where the mix up was. Under debt service interest and principal both went up by \$40k from what previously was presented. He indicated that the budget went up approximately \$80k from what was previously presented and the admin proposed budget is the \$2,101,779.00 and all the necessary changes were made to reflect that. He stated the only line items that were changing was debt.

Mr. Nordstrom explained to Mr. Silvia that they were about \$2.3m unfunded several years ago in the Birch Hill, School Street and Ironstone for years and still trying to find out if that is still the case. Back in 1999, when Woonsocket prioritized, North Smithfield received \$400,000.00 from that sale and that helped that deficit so long ago and that would bring it down which was still very substantial. The previous finance director Jill Gemma, provided to the sewer commission draft statements but because they have not been audited, the audit was not approved she had to have them back. But he had heard her say that they were \$300k unfunded but she wasn't worried about it.

Mr. Silvia stated that this was new to him and that he will look into it

further and talk to the auditors.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that he will send him everything he has. He asked if sewer lot development fees show up on the report?

Mr. Silvia stated that he can set up an account going forward that has not been done.

Mr. Carpenter indicated that it goes into a miscellaneous account right now.

Mr. Silvia stated that it goes into miscellaneous which doesn't have a budget each year but at the end of the year, it goes into sewer surplus.

Mr. Nordstrom asked if they have received anything for Marshfield Commons as of yet.

Mr. Carpenter stated that yes, just for permit fees.

Mr. Silvia indicated that they have received \$5,600.00 to date and that is sitting in miscellaneous income account.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that typically they take the budget and divide it by the number of users and they have not done that with this budget. He informed them that he is a little worried about the future

expansion that Woonsocket will be going through and if they can keep the user rates the same and keep that money in a restricted account so it can't be used for anything else.

Mr. Connolly asked if there was thought about having a formal rate study?

Mr. Silvia didn't know when the last one had been done. He knows that there is talk about doing one on the water side and it would make sense to do it on the sewer side. He thinks that it is something that needs to be done.

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Mr. Connolly stated that they see down the pike that they will have some major capital expenditures coming their way that they don't have a lot of control over and he feels that they should start structuring the rates.

Mr. Nordstrom is in agreement to have some outside entity, to answer some of the questions and help freeze up some of his time and have an independent set of eyes looking at it which is always of some value.

Mr. Connolly asked if they started on working on setting a rate?

Mr. Carpenter informed them that he has the information on the back of his report including the number of sewer users they have right now. He informed them that Mr. Wilcox will be sending out 1,630 bills to the users for 2011/2012 and that will become 3118 users. He also stated that they are going to accrue some fees this year and were told by Woonsocket's superintendent Sheila, they don't know yet but the fees for engineering and some fees the town will get charged this year for that project.

Mr. Silvia supplied to the commission copies of statements that he has begun to prepare monthly statements for water and sewer now. He supplied a report for revenue and expenses report for April, 2011.

Mr. Carpenter indicated that he has some purchases that he still needs to make for this year. It wouldn't be for capital, it would be pumps that Mr. Alvarez had put in the budget and rebuilding Branch River pumps. It wasn't approved until January so he couldn't spend anything. They will still come in under.

Mr. Connolly asked if there will still be a surplus?

Mr. Silvia replied yes. He stated that looking at this year for revenue and even so in prior years there are many other line items that on the revenue side, the only thing they budget for are users and assessment fees and interest. There are many other revenue sources. There is substantial revenue there that is not being

budgeted which would really help offset the expense side. He feels it is a win win situation.

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on a 3-0 aye vote to freezing the user fees at the same rate they were last year.

Mr. Connolly is requesting to have a rate study done.

Mr. Silvia was in agreement.

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

There was no correspondence and communications.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

OPEN FORUM PURSUANT TO RIGL SECTION 42-46-6 (d)

Mr. Joseph DeMayo of 62 Alpine Way, Silver Pines handed out minutes from a town council meeting book #21, dated September 18, 2000. He asked that why in the year 2010 did the commission ask that the Silver Pines pump station be taken over?

Mr. Connolly stated that prior to that they had not come up to standards.

Mr. DeMayo read that “Motion by Mr. O’Brien, seconded by Mr. Biron, that upon completion of the sewer line, water line, and any related infrastructure, that they be turned over to the town. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote of the council.”

Mr. Connolly stated that the lines they are referring to is not the ones that the condos are connected to.

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Mr. DeMayo stated that there are 16 houses on Main Street that are connected to this pump station along with Silver Pines. He explained that they had problems with their laterals back in January and explained how it was handled by the town and that there was some sewage coming into some property homes at Silver Pines. Mr. Carpenter was contacted and he told them that the lines were not the town’s so they had to bring in a private contractor on a Sunday. He asked why can’t the town take care of the lines and he was told to bring it before the town council. He did bring it before the town council on Monday, May 9 but it was tabled.

The way he reads it is that it doesn’t exempt the lines at Silver Pines.

Mr. McGee remembers that when they first did this they deleted anything that was coming into that station it was not the town's.

Mr. DeMayo stated that the information he received at the town council's meeting is that the town did receive the station and a deed was found.

Mr. Connolly stated that the commission recommended a year ago to the town council that the town take it over. And the council has not acted on it.

Mr. Carpenter stated that the commission approved and recommended it last year to the town council, the last year Mr. Alvarez stated that they had the issue with the low flow and that it has been tabled since last March.

The secretary Patricia Paul indicated that yes it was recorded in 2008 in the land evidence records in the town clerk's office.

Mr. Carpenter stated that he has never seen the deed with the town's name on it.

Mr. McGee stated that the town would not have accepted it if there were problems until it was straightened out.

Mr. Connolly stated that is why it was carried on so long.

Mr. DeMayo stated that when Mr. Alvarez was present when he dealt with him and he knows that there were issues because someone at DAS didn't want to pay for mechanical seals, they thought it was a gasket and mechanical seals are an expensive piece of equipment. He feels that the town is doing Silver Pines a favor because they are monitoring the pump station but the station is not having preventative maintenance, (pm) and he does have 30 years plus of wastewater experience.

Mr. Nordstrom informed Mr. DeMayo that Main Street is the town's and Silver Pines turned that over to the town. He asked the secretary to go back to past minutes on correspondence for a recommendation from Geremia on the pump station that in the correspondence there is a deed and no action was taken because it was just correspondence. It had nothing to do with the sewer commission because the sewer commission made their recommendation in 2000 and the town council just blew the commission off. In the January 2010 minutes, Mr. Kane had put it on the agenda and the commission questioned him at that time why and the commission had signed off on this year's ago. Mr. Kane stated that the town council wants the sewer commission to take action and wants the commission to make a recommendation to them on that.

Mr. Carpenter stated that if the deed was recorded in 2008, the town kept asking DAS for the pump seals and he doesn't think that they

knew they turned it over to the town at that time.

Both Mr. Nordstrom and Mr. Connolly saw a deed in their correspondence at a past meeting but didn't think it was fully executed by the town council.

Mr. Connolly stated that back further in time, there were standards that they did not meet. They were told that they had to do X,Y and Z and have so many parts on-line and they never did it. Once the pump station was built, they never accepted it because there was always a punch list. They never finished the punch list.

Mr. Nordstrom made the point that it wasn't up to the sewer commission to accept it because it wasn't a sewer commission issue. The town council asked the sewer commission to do a favor because they didn't know what to do. The sewer commission told them to accept the pump station and then it was tabled by the council.

Mr. DeMayo wanted to inform the sewer commission that he did go before the town council and it was tabled and will be going before them at their August meeting.

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Mr. DeMayo informed the sewer commission that the town council President asked the town administrator to do research on this at the

town council meeting and present it at the August meeting.

Mr. Carpenter stated that Mr. Yazbak stated if he (Mr. DeMayo) wanted to contest to the town taking care of the lines for him to bring that to the administration and they would then bring it up to the town council and if they want to accept maintaining lines and private property.

ADJOURN

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on a 3-0 aye vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia A. Paul

Commission Secretary